



**May 2006**

## **AWIN Monthly Newsletter**

### **Send us your story**

Do you have a story you would like to share with other end users? Any advice you want to pass along to agencies that are awaiting a cutover in their area? We want to know how AWIN is working for you! Please send your comments to [awin@arkansas.gov](mailto:awin@arkansas.gov).

### **AWIN Support**

In partnership with the Arkansas State Police, the Department of Information Systems (DIS) operates the AWIN Call Center to support all AWIN subscribers (radio users) with technical assistance or AWIN-related requests. Technicians are on call in the event of any emergency. Call (501) 682-HELP (682-4357) or toll-free (800) 435-7989 or e-mail:

[awin.support@arkansas.gov](mailto:awin.support@arkansas.gov)

### **AWIN assists during recent storms**

Tornados destroyed homes and businesses last month in northeast Arkansas, including some in Randolph County. More than seven homes and about five businesses were destroyed, and sheds and grain bins were damaged just outside of the county seat of Pocahontas. Randolph County officials are pleased with the help that the AWIN system provided after the storms hit the area.

After tornados moved through the county and officials were alerted of damage in the area, they put the AWIN system to work. Officials contacted the local Law Enforcement Training Academy, and borrowed cadets to act as security in the damaged areas. The officers in training were issued AWIN radios in order to communicate with the local dispatch center. County deputies were working throughout the county and could respond if needed. "Using the AWIN radios worked real good for us. We didn't have to clutter up our other channels," says Randolph County OEM Coordinator Marty Cagle.

Randolph County has purchased a total of 10 AWIN radios. The county's OEM Coordinator and 911 Coordinator carry a Command and Control radio with them at all times. The radios have

been put to use when emergencies happened in areas where other radio systems do not reach. "I was greatly surprised by the reception," says Cagle.

Cagle's initial concern was that the AWIN radios were costly, and was afraid that the radios would be put into inventory and collect dust. After receiving the radios, Cagle took his AWIN portable and did some coverage testing of his own throughout the county. He was impressed with the clear reception in areas where agencies previously had no radio communications. "It sounded like the dispatchers were right there next to me." Cagle even took the radio into a canyon where agencies had responded to emergencies before and was able to communicate with dispatchers from the bottom of the ravine. The 911 coordinator recently traveled to Springdale, and was able to talk clearly to the 911 center on the opposite side of the state.

Cagle is impressed with the assistance that the AWIN system has provided the county thus far. He says the digital radio system will be a definite help in situations such as rescues in rural areas of the northeast Arkansas county.

### **CSEPP installations**

Cutovers for the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program (CSEPP) should be complete by the end of May in Jefferson County. The target cutover date for the CSEPP county is May 24, 2006.

Programming at the Pine Bluff Police Department is complete and is now in progress at the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Technicians are in the process of installing antennas and

additional equipment at the Jefferson County Emergency Operations Center (EOC). Console screen layouts are also being finalized for the center. Also, programming for control stations should be complete next week, and modifications to the T1 line are in the planning process. All modifications should be in place prior to the cutover date.

## ADEM and AWIN

The Arkansas Department of Emergency Management (ADEM) has recently assigned two members of the Information Technology Division to serve as points of contact for AWIN related issues. The two designees will handle both ADEM and AWIN operations and equipment matters.

Jennifer Hudson will serve as the point of contact for ADEM, AWIN and MAC (Mutual Aid Channel) talk groups, operational procedures, policy and planning. Joe Halsey will serve as the technical point of contact for ADEM and AWIN equipment. Any questions regarding operations or equipment relating to ADEM's use of the AWIN system should be directed to the two appointed ADEM contacts.



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ADEM representatives have developed an ADEM radio manual. The manual can be located on the ADEM website under the shared file links or at <ftp://www.adem.state.ar.us>.

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## Three County Pilot Project updates

Counties involved in the Tri-County Pilot Project are seeing a lot of activity recently, and the construction of new towers is moving quickly. Construction of the new site building and tower in northeast Lonoke County is complete, and electrical power and the generator are in place and operational. Technicians are currently installing radio transmission equipment, which is being installed "cold". Microwave components will be installed by Harris Microwave by the end of the month. Motorola has completed a walk-through with the Cabot Police Department and the Lonoke County Sheriff's office for dispatch console planning purposes. Grace Communications of Little Rock is programming subscriber units for Lonoke County, and once programming is complete radio

installation will begin.

Tower construction began this week in Craighead County. Planning for radio subscriber programming and installation is currently underway. Motorola representatives spent time in Jonesboro this week working on dispatch console planning for Craighead County.



As soon as tower construction is complete in Craighead County, crews will head south to Miller County. Dispatch console planning with Miller County is scheduled to begin

within the next two weeks.



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